

"His millions?" repeated Sheila. She slipped off the arm of her chair without turning her wide look from Dickie and sat down with an air of deliberate sobriety. "His inheritance?" she repeated.

"Yes, ma'am. That's what took him East. He had news at Rusty. He wrote you a letter and sent it by a man who was to fetch you to Rusty. You were to stay there with his wife till Hilliard would be coming back for you. But, Sheila, the man was caught in a trap and buried by a blizzard. They found him only about a week ago — with Hilliard's letter in his pocket." Dickie fumbled in his own steaming coat. "Here it is. I've got it."

"Don't give it to me yet," she said. "Go on."

"Well," Dickie turned the shriveled and stained paper lightly in restless fingers. "That morning in New York I got up close to the car and had my notebook out. Hilliard was waiting for the ambulance. His ribs were smashed and his arm broken. He was conscious. He was laughing and talking and smoking cigarettes. I asked him some questions and he took a notion to question *me*. 'You're from the West,' he said; and when I told him 'Millings,' he kind of gasped and sat up. That turned him faint. But when they were carrying him off, he got a-holt of my hand and whispered, 'Come see me at the hospital.' I was willing enough — I went. And they took me to him — private room. And a nice-looking nurse. And flowers. He has lots of friends in New York — Hilliard, you